



Westborough High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107775
LEA Kirklees
Inspection number 277842
Inspection dates 7 June 2006 to 8 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Jane Austin HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Stockhill Street
School category	Community		Dewsbury
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		West Yorkshire WF13 2JE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01924 325223
Number on roll	911	Fax number	01924 325226
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Naseem Akram
Date of previous inspection	15 January 2001	Headteacher	Mrs Janet Pruchniewicz

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Westborough High is a comprehensive school of average size, serving an area of significant social disadvantage. At 65%, the proportion of students from minority ethnic origins is very high. About half come from Pakistani backgrounds, a third are White British and approximately a tenth are of Indian heritage. The percentage of students who speak English as an additional language, 60%, is very high compared with the national picture. The

proportion eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. The school has Leading Edge status and holds the Investors in People award. It has been awarded the Silver Artsmark and the Sportsmark.

The inspection took place during a period in which the headteacher was not present in school. The acting headteacher, providing interim leadership, was in hospital.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Westborough High judges itself to be a good school and inspectors agree. The school rightly prides itself on its inclusive ethos and positive climate for learning. The outstanding care, guidance and support provided for all students helps them learn well by assessing their individual needs effectively and meeting these successfully. As a consequence of teaching, which is at least good and often outstanding, students achieve well in relation to their starting points and capabilities. However, the standards they reach are well below average by the end of both Key Stage 3 and 4. Students enjoy learning both in lessons and through the broad range of extra-curricular and community-based activities provided by the school. Behaviour is good and attendance levels are above the national average. The curriculum is well designed and increasingly tailored to meet the needs of individual learners. In Years 10 and 11 it helps prepare students effectively for their next steps in education and employment.

A strong and effective team of senior managers leads the school well in its drive for continuous improvement. The school has highly effective procedures for reviewing its performance and uses these well to establish priorities and future directions. Middle leaders make a good contribution to achieving these. However, the school lacks a robust system for strategic planning. It has made good progress since the previous inspection and its capacity to improve is good. It provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further improve students' basic skills in order to raise standards at both key stages.
- Improve strategic planning so that there is a transparent link between the school's priorities and its allocation of funding.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students enter the school with standards that are well below average. By the end of both Key Stage 3 and 4, their results remain well below average overall. However, the detailed analysis of achievement shows that the school does consistently well for its students and that, overall, learners make good progress in relation to their capabilities.

Data agreed with the school show that the rate of progress now being made has improved when compared to last year. This derives both from good teaching and from the effective use of information provided through the school's thorough system of assessment, tracking and target-setting. Awards from the local authority in each of the last two years recognise the strength of the school's practice in this area. Much of this achievement is grounded, too, in students' enjoyment of school and the positive attitudes they bring to their learning.

Prior attainment in literacy and numeracy remains a constraint. Many students enter school with a low reading age and struggle with basic skills, particularly literacy: the school therefore rightly concentrates on language acquisition and development for

those for whom English is a second language. This has secured an improvement from 57% to nearly 70% of learners having a reading age of ten years or above by the April of their first year in school. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Achievement has been consistently less good in science at Key Stage 3 than for the same students in other subjects. However, at Key Stage 3 there has been a year on year increase in the numbers gaining Level 6 or above in English, mathematics and science, showing that the most able students at this stage are achieving well. This is not sustained in Key Stage 4, where few students achieve the highest GCSE grades.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of students is good. The school is inclusive. It works very hard to meet the needs of all its students and to involve parents in the process of education. Students enjoy coming to school, as indicated by the high levels of attendance, and demonstrate confidence in their relationships with each other and staff. The large numbers of students involved in sporting activities and the commitment of the school council to healthy eating indicate a positive approach to developing healthy lifestyles.

Students feel very safe and receive good support from staff and senior students who act as prefects and mentors. The new behaviour management strategy ensures that students are well aware of the consequences of bad behaviour and this, combined with the very effective inclusion unit, has resulted in very low numbers of exclusions and better progress in lessons.

Learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as illustrated by the excellent relationships within school, the work that is carried out in the local community and the support given to a wide range of charities. Students have good opportunities to contribute to school improvement, both through the school council and the willingness of all staff to listen to their views. The school prepares its students well for their future education and employment, as illustrated by its enterprise week and its achievement of the Quality Standard Award for careers.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and it is often outstanding. The sharing of lesson objectives with students is making a significantly positive impact on their learning. Students enjoy most of their lessons and because there is mutual respect between teachers and students, learning takes place in a harmonious atmosphere. Consequently, students make good progress. In the best of lessons, the teacher has infectious enthusiasm and students are fully engaged in their learning. A particularly strong feature is the way students work cooperatively. They help one another by

assessing each other's work and making suggestions on how it could be improved. In less effective lessons the work is not presented to match the needs of different groups. Sometimes the teacher does too much of the work and this limits the scope for students to think for themselves.

There are effective arrangements for assessing students' work. Extensive information on the performance of individual students and their expected levels of attainment are being used well to set challenging targets and track their progress. Most students know their targets and how well they are doing. Instances of underachievement are identified so that appropriate action can be taken.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good and improving curriculum. It is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. The curriculum makes a significant contribution to students' overall personal and social development, including citizenship and enterprise. For example, Year 9 students spend a week working on a range of activities improving the quality of life in the local community.

The school is robust in adapting the curriculum to changing needs. A range of suitable pathways are in place for students as they make the transfer from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4. Effective, collaborative links with neighbouring institutions are extending the range of available subjects, and particularly vocational courses and work-related learning. As a consequence of this flexibility, the curriculum is being more closely tailored to meet individual needs.

The school provides a wide variety of sporting, creative and educational activities outside the normal school day. These are well supported by students and make a valuable contribution to their levels of enjoyment and learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care provided by the school is outstanding. Well established links with partner primary schools ensure that the strengths and needs of all students are identified and that a smooth transition to high school takes place. Students benefit from a comprehensive network of guidance and support that is well managed by the heads of year. Vulnerable students receive excellent support through the school's inclusion unit and the work of learning mentors. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by additional help, special provision such as the Year 7 nurture group, and the very well established links with parents and outside agencies. Child protection procedures are clearly expressed and arrangements for safe guarding students are well established. Students confirm that they have ample opportunities to consider and discuss issues relating to developing safe and healthy lifestyles. They are very well informed about their progress in school and receive very good advice about curriculum choices and future educational and career opportunities.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher and senior leaders have effectively established and gained the staff's commitment to a clear vision for the school as a community that values all its students equally and strives vigorously to ensure they each learn as well as possible. In collaboration with staff, suitable priorities to realise this aim have been established and progress towards these are reviewed and refocused regularly. This process is well informed by the rigorous and systematic cycle of monitoring and evaluation led both by senior and middle leaders. The school has a thorough grasp of its strengths and areas for development. However, overall strategic planning covers only the short term and is not linked effectively to financial planning.

The school develops leadership at all levels well. The energetic and committed middle leaders discharge their responsibilities effectively, partly as a consequence of high quality, appropriately focused joint training. In addition to developing their leadership skills, this has fostered a supportive and consistent approach to fulfilling their roles. Procedures for holding staff to account are robust and well supported by professional development opportunities carefully matched to school priorities as well as the needs of individuals. Management structures enable staff at all levels to contribute their ideas and skills to improving the school.

The school is highly regarded by the local community and oversubscribed. Dedicated staff work hard to establish and sustain very effective liaison with families and the wider community. In the school's present difficult situation, the senior team is successfully retaining the confidence of students and parents alike. Likewise, they are highly effective in maintaining the continued commitment of staff to meeting students' needs as well as possible. The school continues to operate smoothly day to day.

Despite the recent breakdown in the working relationship between the headteacher and the governing body, governance is satisfactory overall. The governing body has worked hard to ensure it receives the full range of information required to fulfil its duties efficiently. An appropriate cycle of meetings has been established and committee structures are suitable for discharging the governing body's functions. Governors hold the school to account by asking challenging questions and seeking clarification on a wide range of issues.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for such a warm welcome on our recent visit to your school, and for being so pleasant, open and helpful when we came to your lessons, talked with you in discussion groups or met you around the school.

We would like to tell you what we found.

We think you go to a good school that provides you with a good education and equips you well for the future. The management and staff work well together to ensure you make good progress. They know what the school does well and how to improve it further. The school provides outstanding care and support for all of you, with staff being very committed to you and the community. You told us that they are very approachable and deal quickly with any bullying, racist incidents or other problems. You feel safe at school and are encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles. Staff keep close track of how you are getting on in your learning and provide the right type of extra support if you need it.

Your teachers work hard and teach well. We saw many outstanding lessons that you really enjoyed, especially where you were involved in what was going on. Almost everywhere we went we found that you are keen to learn and behave well. You have a good choice of courses and the school provides interesting activities outside lessons which you enjoy.

There are a few improvements we think would make your school an even better place to learn. Some are purely administrative, but the school knows that you could do better in examinations. We are also asking them to continue helping you improve your English so that you learn better in all your subjects.

You are fortunate in being at a school that does so much to help you. We wish you and your school well in the future.